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John Hugh Bowers, Ph.D., LL.B.

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# **Lincoln-Douglas Debate**

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## LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE.

The Lincoln-Douglas debate, in the senatorial campaign, in Illinois, in 1858, made Lincoln President in 1860. Students of history have declared that the election of Abraham Lincoln as President of the United States, in 1860, was the most fortunate event in the country's history. This statement is based upon the inference that Lincoln's policies were essential factors in saving the Union, while the known policies of the other candidates for that office would have lost the Union.

The Lincoln-Douglas debate, though it resulted in the re-election of Douglas as Senator from Illinois, gave to Lincoln that increased prestige without which he could never have been nominated or elected President in 1860. The debate itself,—A titanic oratorical contest,—commands profound interest, because of the outstanding character of the contestants, the destiny of the institutions involved, and the immense concern of the whole American people in both immediate and remote results. The intense interest in this great debate will forever be part of the fundamental interest in American progress and the longer story of human welfare.

A careful study of this debate is profitable, because it sheds light on the critical period in



American history, reveals human nature dealing with momentous problems, and illuminates the methods by which the great art of public speech is used to influence public conduct in a great epoch.

Because Lincoln and Douglas, in the course of the debate, each made references to their past records, it is necessary to have in mind the brief sketch, here given, of the life history of each. And because the debate was on the question of slavery, and referred so frequently to the history of that question, it is necessary to here give first a very brief review of at least those facts, in the history of slavery, to which the speakers refer. The speakers inferred that their hearers had fresh in memory the recent history of slavery agitation and legislation, and, accordingly, we here offer a narration of such facts as are necessary to understand the meaning of the debate, before giving the debate itself.

Therefore, this volume presents, first, a brief sketch of each debater, just sufficient to understand the references in the debate; second, just enough of the history of the slavery question to comprehend the allusions of the speakers; third, the circumstances attending the debate along with the chief arguments and replies of each speaker; fourth, the major and important portions of the speeches of Lincoln and of Douglas are given in the exact words of the speaker.

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

Abraham Lincoln was born in a log cabin in Kentucky, February 12, 1809. His childhood, like that of Douglas, was spent in poverty. He attended pioneer schools, in all, only a few months, but his devoted mother helped him to learn to read and write, and encouraged him to study such books as he could borrow in a pioneer community. His father moved to Indiana, where his gentle and delicate mother died when he was nine years old. One year later his father married again. His stepmother was very kind to him and also encouraged him in spending his few spare moments in profitable reading.

His biographers regard his mother as so gentle and refined, and his stepmother as so wise and worthy that they do not know which he meant when in later life he expressed his appreciation for his mother. During the time he was President he said: "All that I am and all that I hope to be I owe to my sainted mother."

His father moved to Illinois in 1830. There

Lincoln split rails, did general farm work, took a flat boat to New Orleans, where the sight of the slave market stirred his feelings. He clerked in a store, was Deputy County Surveyor, volunteered in the Blackhawk War, was elected to the Legislature, studied law and was admitted to the bar. In 1837 he moved to Springfield, the capital, where he practiced law during the remaining years of his life, except during the two years (1846 to 1848) when he served in Congress, and during the four years and forty days that he was President.

In 1836, he and Douglas were both in the Legislature; Lincoln as a Whig leader, and Douglas as a leader of the Democrats. Later they were rivals for the hand of Miss Mary Todd, who became the wife of Lincoln. They met again when Lincoln went to Congress in 1847, where Douglas was in the Senate.

While in the Legislature Lincoln expressed himself as opposed to slavery at a time when opposition to slavery was as yet quite unpopular, thus showing that with him conscience was stronger than expediency. While in Congress he was in harmony with the Whig policy of



criticising the administration program for expanding slave territory, in the annexation of Texas, and the war with Mexico. His criticism of the administration probably prevented him from being renominated. He returned to the practice of law in Springfield and was thus engaged when the Dred Scott decision and the Kansas-Nebraska Bill both favoring the extension of slavery stirred him to re-enter the political arena, campaigning for the Republican nominee for President in 1856, and as the Republican nominee for the Senate in 1858, against Douglas.

At that time Douglas was the most prominent Democrat in the United States, and Lincoln challenged him for a joint debate.

## STEPHEN ARNOLD DOUGLAS.

Stephen Arnold Douglas was born at Brandon, Vermont, April 23, 1813, and died at Chicago, June 3, 1861. He was the son of a physician who died when Stephen was an infant, leaving him to struggle with poverty. He was apprenticed to a cabinet-maker, but his health failed and he quit after a year and a half. He then studied for three years at the academy of Canandaigua, where he gave some time to the study of law. In 1833 he went to Jacksonville, Illinois, where he supported himself by teaching school and clerking for an auctioneer. He was admitted to the bar in 1834 and rapidly built up a good practice. In 1835 he was elected Attorney General of the State. In December, 1835, he was elected a member of the Legislature. In 1837 he was appointed Registrar of the land office at Springfield. In December, 1840, he became Secretary of the State of Illinois. In 1841 he became a judge of the Supreme Court of Illinois, which position he resigned to run for Congress on the Democratic

ticket in 1843, and was elected. He was elected to the United States Senate in 1847 and again in 1853, and in 1858.

While in Congress he took an active part in the Oregon controversy in which he was positively opposed to yielding up one inch of territory. He was also a leading promoter of the measures for the annexation of Texas and the war with Mexico. He was chairman of the Territorial Committee, which early brought him into prominence in discussing the question of slavery in the territories. He advocated the doctrine of "popular sovereignty," that is, that each territory should decide for itself whether it should have slavery or not. The bill for organizing the territories of Kansas and Nebraska, which Douglas reported out of Committee in January, 1854, caused great popular excitement, because it repealed the Missouri Compromise, and declared the people of any state or territory free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States.

There was great indignation throughout the free states of the North, and Douglas, as the

chief promoter of the measure, was hanged or burned in effigy in many places. He said that he could travel from Washington to Chicago by the light of his burning effigies

The South was pleased with the measure; and consequently the North accused Douglas of having forsaken the cause of freedom to seek the support of Southern Democrats for the nomination for the Presidency. Both in 1852 and again in 1856 he was a candidate for the nomination on the Democratic ticket for the Presidency, but was not nominated.

Douglas pleased the Southern Democrats and displeased the North by the Kansas-Nebraska Bill of 1854; he certainly pleased the North, and displeased the Southern Democrats, in 1857, by opposing the admission of Kansas as a slave state under the Lecompton constitution, which he maintained was fraudulently organized. This Lecompton constitution for Kansas was supported by the Democratic administration; therefore the people of the North regarded it as very courageous and conscientious in Douglas to oppose it. On this account some of the Northern people,—some of the old Whigs

and some of the Republicans,—thought that the Republicans of Illinois ought not to offer a candidate against him; but the Republican convention at Springfield, June 16, 1858, nominated Abraham Lincoln.



### THE DEBATE'S BACKGROUND.

Slavery was introduced very early, both in Northern and Southern colonies, but it proved unprofitable in the Northern colonies and very profitable in the Southern colonies; consequently, few slaves were kept in the North while large numbers were imported into the South. In the early days the sentiment in the two sections was not very different; there being many prominent men in the South who were opposed to the institution, while Northern navigators were busy shipping slaves from Africa to Southern ports.

Gradually the Northern people got rid of their few slaves; the sentiment in that section became almost unanimous that slavery was not desirable, and then most Northern States enacted legislation forbidding slavery within their boundaries. While the number of slaves increased rapidly in the South, a small but influential minority of the white men owned nearly all the slaves. Among the slave holders of the South were some who expressed regret concerning the existence of the institu-

tion; and this was especially true before the agitation of the question tended to coerce the men of each section to take sides with their neighbors and become unified against the other section.

When the Ordinance of 1787, concerning the territory northwest of the Ohio River, provided that slavery should never exist in any part of that domain, it was agreed to without opposition; but almost contemporaneously, in the sessions of that convention which framed the Constitution, the division between the opponents of slavery and its defenders presented a grave obstacle in the way of union. Compromise was necessary, if the union was to be established at all, and the fact that provisions, in behalf of slavery, were made in the Constitution at that time shows that the friends of slavery believed that it needed protection against the sentiment that was rising against it.

This feeling between North and South grew slowly and found its next positive expression in the famous Missouri Compromise of 1820. The Territory of Missouri asked for admission

as a state with slaves; congressmèn from the North, opposed to the extension of slavery, protested; the debate waxed hot, and the contention seemed to threaten the existence of the Union; when the matter was compromised, by granting to the South the admission of Missouri as a slave state, and placating the North, with the provision that no more slave states should be formed north of the parallel of thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes,—the southern boundary of Missouri. This compromise, which stood the ever increasing strain for thirty-four years, came to be regarded by the people as something only less sacred than the Constitution itself. Even Douglas, who led the forces for its repeal, said that it had an “origin akin to the Constitution and was canonized in the hearts of the American people as a sacred thing.”

Though the great majority of the northern people were not actively hostile to slavery; and though the Abolitionists were a small minority, ignored by many and despised by some of their own neighbors for their anti-slavery agitation; nevertheless, the southern people felt that their institution of slavery, being in derogation of

natural rights, needed legal protection. The population of the North was increasing much more rapidly than that of the South, and with a people that were naturally inimical if not hostile to slavery. Thus it became an unwritten law that slave states and free states should be kept equal in number so that the South could not be outvoted in the Senate. But the North was filling up the northwestern region with non slave-holding communities, while the South had no more western territory to furnish additional slave states.

Consequently, southern people pushed westward into Texas—territory then belonging to Mexico—secured the independence of that territory from Mexico, gained admission to the Union as a slave state, brought on the Mexican War and through the combination of conquest and purchase, secured all the territory from Texas to the Pacific; thus providing the possibility of a number of additional slave states. By making these gains in possible slave territory the South aroused the dormant anti-slavery sentiment of the North. Therefore, when President Polk asked for an appropriation to purchase territory from Mexico, the famous

Wilmot Proviso was introduced, prohibiting slavery in any of the territory thus to be acquired. This proviso was lost but it revealed the strength of those who were opposed to the extension of slavery.

The southern hopes for expansion met early disappointment when California asked to be admitted as a free state; and again when New Mexico gave promise of becoming a free state, and was actually encouraged therein by President Taylor, who was himself a slave holder. Southern Senators, having no slave territory from which to make a slave state to offset California, opposed the admission of California as a free state and fell back upon the appalling threat of disunion. To prevent New Mexico from being admitted as a free state, Texas laid claim to nearly all that territory.

In debate against the Wilmot Proviso, southern statesmen had said that Congress had no right, under the Constitution, to interfere with the property rights of citizens in the territories, and that slaves were property. These amazing declarations were, of course, contrary to the established ideas of the northern people, and contrary to the Missouri Com-



promise of 1820 and the ordinance of the North-West Territory of 1787.

Those who loved peace and desired union were seriously alarmed. To the great satisfaction of these conservative people, and to the equal disgust of the extremists, both North and South, Henry Clay again appeared in his great role of compromiser. With dramatic effect, he came forth from the retirement in which he seemed to have sought a brief respite before death should claim him; aged, feeble, with an impressive air of sadness; obviously devoting the last remnants of his failing energies to the great task of again compromising threatening factions, and of saving the Union he had loved and served so long.

In January, 1850, he introduced into the Senate his "comprehensive scheme of adjustment." Not as "oil upon angry waters" was it received. Every one was offended by some part of it, and the debate which followed was one of the most momentous in American history.

For more than six months that titanic debate involved all the prominent men of that day—Clay, Webster, Seward, Sumner, Chase,

Calhoun and Jefferson Davis each gave to the occasion his best; and the people followed it all with intense interest. Calhoun came, as from the edge of the grave into which he sank a few weeks later, and sat listening by, too feeble to talk, while his speech was read by Mason of Virginia. Clay—on his feet constantly—his words gaining rather than losing power from his pathetic feebleness, declared “I am here expecting soon to be called hence, and owing no responsibility but to my own conscience and to God.” For a long time all his heroic efforts seemed to be for naught; as his bill was sneeringly nicknamed the “Omnibus Bill,” harrassed by amendments and finally defeated. Then as if Congress had changed its mind in his direction, it took up and passed the several features of his measure one at a time. Texas was given ten million dollars for her claim on the territory of New Mexico. California was admitted as a free state. New Mexico was organized as a territory with the provision that when she should form a state constitution the question of slavery should be determined by popular vote of the people, and that during her territorial existence the ques-

tion of slavery should be determined by the Supreme Court of the United States. (Here we get the first suggestion of "Squatter Sovereignty" and of a "Dred Scott Decision.") A more efficient Fugitive Slave Law was passed. And the slave trade in the District of Columbia was abolished. No one was pleased with what was done, but all felt that compromise was necessary and that a spirit of liberal acquiescence was more important than any other consideration at that time.

The masses felt intense relief at seeing the imminent disaster of civil discord averted,—or at least postponed. The farsighted few knew it was only postponed. The aggressive men on either side were not satisfied. The South saw that no other gain could offset the admission of California as a free state, thus losing to them the balance of power in the Senate. The anti slavery men in the North were alarmed at the doctrine of popular sovereignty and non-intervention by Congress, as expressed in the measure organizing the Territory of New Mexico.

Lincoln recognized the futility of this whole arrangement and declared that the question of

slavery could never be successfully compromised. Nevertheless he accepted the situation as the best that could be done at the time.

In the North, the few farsighted and devoted Abolitionists, knowing that the peace was only temporary, continued their work of teaching that human slavery was wrong; and were consequently persecuted by the thoughtless majority who were opposed to agitation, and who hoped in vain to promote peace by squelching discussion. Though the masses were saying, "Let us have peace," all felt that the concord would at once change to discord unless the nation should, in 1852, elect a proslavery President. Consequently, Franklin Pierce was chosen. Lincoln made some speeches in the campaign, but under the circumstances, his biographer and law partner, Herndon, says that he did not speak with his usual effectiveness, because so many Northern men felt the desire for peace rather than victory.

In January, 1854, Douglas introduced into the Senate, his famous "Kansas-Nebraska Bill" establishing the two territories and declaring the Missouri Compromise "inoperative" therein; to which bill an amendment was added repealing

the Missouri Compromise and providing to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States." With this amendment the bill finally passed after a long fight. While Douglas, as the Democratic leader in the Senate, got the credit for the authorship of this doctrine of "popular sovereignty," the idea was not necessarily original with him, as we find it appearing in substance in the Compromise of 1850; and we also find that Senator Dixon of Kentucky offered such a measure in the Senate seven days before Douglas introduced the "Kansas-Nebraska Bill."

This repeal of the Missouri Compromise fired with indignation all the antislavery forces of the North, the mild conservatives as well as the ardent radicals. Lincoln's innate antipathy for the institution of slavery was thoroughly aroused. He had been practicing law and had apparently lost some of his early enthusiasm concerning public affairs, but this new possibility of the extension of slave territory stirred his sympathetic soul with fierce indignation.



Douglas came home in the autumn and was given a disagreeable reception by an indignant audience in Chicago. He set about to win back his Illinois. He spoke to a large audience at the great state fair. Lincoln was called upon to answer him, and did so, effectively. Lincoln felt a wise instinct to follow Douglas up and contest with him as often as occasion permitted, but Douglas finding him such a troublesome adversary proposed a truce to which Lincoln good-naturedly assented.

Lincoln, contrary to his wishes, was elected to the Legislature the following winter. wishing to be a candidate for the Senate, he resigned, and a reaction in Sangamon County put a Democrat in his place. In the Legislature, the Douglas-Democrats wished to reelect General Shields, the present incumbent. On the first ballot, Lincoln got a larger number of votes than any other candidate, and nearly a majority. He ought to have been elected, and would have been, but was opposed bitterly, by a few, on account of his antislavery sentiments. When it seemed that he could not be chosen himself he begged his staunch supporters to

vote for Lyman Trumbull, who was an anti-Douglas and anti slavery Democrat.

During the Lincoln-Douglas debate, Douglas charged that Lincoln and Trumbull had made a bargain that Lincoln was to take the place of Senator Shields in '54 while Trumbull was to have the place of Douglas in '58; and if there was ever any truth at all in that charge, it was very magnanimous on the part of Lincoln to turn this election to Trumbull at this time.

Lincoln and Douglas both figured in the Presidential campaign of 1856; Douglas as a defeated aspirant for the Democratic nomination; (the Democrats preferring James Buchanan who was understood to be displeased with the repeal of the Missouri Compromise) while Lincoln, not a candidate at all, was given 110 votes for the nomination for second place on the Republican ticket in their national convention. When Lincoln heard this he remarked, "They probably thought that they were voting for the great Lincoln from Massachusetts."

The immediate effect of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill was to start a contest between the anti-slavery men of the North and the proslavery men of the South to see who could first occupy

the new territory and carry the election. The North had the advantage of a much larger population, while the South had the advantage of proximity, it being only necessary to move across the Missouri border. Antislavery merchants and professional men in the North subscribed money to pay the way of sturdy immigrants who would move to Kansas and make their homes there. These free-state men were legitimate settlers and disposed to orderly methods, but both willing and able to fight if necessary. To the few bonafide immigrants from the South were added a number of "border ruffians" from Missouri whose only purpose was to cross into Kansas long enough to take part in the contest and secure the Territory for the extension of slavery, by fair means or foul. These latter contestants showed a preference for the methods of intimidation, yet were willing to use the ballot-box when they could see that it was stuffed with votes on their side. There followed border warfare, imprisonments, rescues, looting, burning; also the forms of law, trials, legislation and court decisions; in all, a strange phantasmagory of in-

timidation, arson, bloodshed together with politics, elections and law.

It was clear that the antislavery men outnumbered the proslavery men, and that the Northerners had come to stay. The slavery party framed up the Lecompton Constitution, providing for slavery, which did not represent the will of the majority at all, but transferred the struggle to the floors of Congress.

Though President Buchanan was supposed to be in sympathy with the Northern Democrats who opposed "Popular Sovereignty," he had solemnly promised that he would be governed by the result of the popular vote in the territories concerned. Now he was confronted by two popular votes from Kansas; the one showing clearly that the antislavery men were in the majority and opposed to the Lecompton Constitution; while the other vote had framed up that Constitution in a way that had the semblance of law and orderly methods. The President chose to support the Lecompton Constitution and accordingly advised Congress to admit Kansas as a slave state.

But Douglas, as the Democratic leader in Congress, took the side against the administra-

tion, declaring that the Lecompton Constitution was a fraud, and due to his efforts it was defeated. For his part in this contest, Douglas took great credit to himself. His friends cited his actions in this case as proof of his great political integrity, while his critics said that this action on his part was necessary to his reelection as Senator from Illinois in 1858. His situation was a difficult one for a politician. Southern Illinois was somewhat proslavery, while the northern part of the state was antislavery. Also he had desired the Democratic nomination for President both in 1852 and in 1856, and he expected to be a candidate again in 1860. He had greatly pleased the Southern Democrats by his part in repealing the Missouri Compromise and opening up the way for slavery to expand into the territories. But in doing this he had displeased the antislavery Democrats of the North and also the Democrats of northern Illinois. His part in preventing the fraudulent admission of Kansas as a slave state restored him in the favor of many Northern Democrats and won him the favor of some who were not Democrats.

We see an instance of the political foresight of



Lincoln in the fact that, nearly two and a half years before the affair of the Lecompton Constitution came up, he said,—“If Kansas fairly votes herself a slave State, she must be admitted or the Union must be dissolved. But if she votes herself a slave State unfairly? . . . , Must she still be admitted or the Union be dissolved? That will be the phase of the question when it first becomes a practical one.” His prophecy was fulfilled.

It was certainly very fortunate for Douglas that his opposition to the admission of Kansas as a slave state came just on the eve of his candidacy for reelection to the Senate in 1858. It was fortunate for Lincoln to have the opportunity to debate, at that time, with the acknowledged leader of the Democrats, thus giving Lincoln a notoriety that he could have secured in no other way. It was fortunate for the welfare of the Union that the combination of circumstances brought Lincoln to the front and made possible his election as President two years later.

From 1852 to 1860 Douglas was the most noteworthy man in public life in this country. Webster, Clay, John Quincy Adams, and Cal-

houn had passed away. Seward, Sumner and Chase were just beginning their brilliant careers, and were organizing the party of the future. During these eight years, Douglas was more prominent than any other man. The reason for his failing to secure the nomination of the Democratic party for the Presidency in 1852, and again in 1856, was partly because he was too prominent; the tendency being to nominate a man who would be less significant, less self-confident, more submissive and manageable. Douglas, though a politician who desired to be President, was not the submissive type. He was aggressive, masterful and self-reliant, as well as a brilliant campaigner, an orator and a tireless fighter.

Douglas was a strong man in debate; combining something of the impressiveness of Webster with the rough and ready arts of the stump speaker. He was also a strong political adversary; possessing the art of popularity, the adroitness of the schemer, and the dignity of a statesman. He had done his best to retain his hold on both the Northern and Southern wings of the Democratic party. He told the Southerners that by his fortunate method of

popular sovereignty he had educated the public mind and accomplished the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. He told the Northerners to remember how peacefully the Union had endured under the arrangement made by the Fathers of the Constitution who provided that each state should govern its own domestic affairs. Douglas had the advantage in that Illinois had been a Democratic state. He also had the advantage in prestige over Lincoln who had served only one term in Congress.

Meanwhile other occurrences had stirred the feelings of antipathy between North and South. The enforcement of the fugitive slave law was odious to many Northern people. Even men who believed in allowing slavery to exist where it was, did not like to see black men dragged back from freedom into captivity. The seizure of an escaped slave, Anthony Burns, in Boston, in 1854, caused a riot in which a mob attacked the Court House; one of the mob was killed, and the militia had to be called out to restore order, costing the state thousands of dollars. In 1856, Preston Brooks, a hot headed Southerner, strode suddenly upon Charles Sumner, seated unarmed at his desk in the Senate

chamber, and beat him savagely over the head with a cane. The South instead of repudiating the act lauded Brooks in a way that caused righteous resentment among Northern people. The resulting reaction in each section showed how wide the breach was between them.

But the most significant event coming between the Compromise of 1850 and the election of 1860 was the Dred Scott Decision, handed down by the Supreme Court of the United States, in 1856, declaring that *a slave is "property," and that his owner is entitled to be protected in the possession of such property in the territories.* This doctrine demolished the doctrine of popular sovereignty which the Douglas Democrats had with so much shrewdness established, because it gave the people no choice at all in the matter. This decision ended the long struggle in Congress over the question of slavery in the territories, and ended it in the way most favorable to the slave interests. It rejoiced the Southern slave holders and thoroughly aroused the indignation of all antislavery men of whatever shade of belief. It was at once apparent that if the Court could make such a decision concerning the territories

it could make a similar decision concerning the states as soon as public sentiment should become sufficiently tolerant. It will be remembered that Chief Justice Roger Brook Taney, who handed down this decision, was a Southern sympathiser, who had been appointed on the Court by Andrew Jackson.

Such was the advancement of the slavery conflict in this country in 1858, when there occurred that great debate between Lincoln and Douglas, resulting in the reelection of Douglas to the Senate, and the election of Lincoln as President in 1860.

### THE DEBATE.

In the year 1856 Lincoln seemed to be absorbed in the practice of law in Springfield, and his interest in national politics had apparently subsided to about the level found in the average intelligent public-spirited citizen, when he was aroused by the evidence that the proslavery forces were making rapid strides in the direction of the extension of slave-territory. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise, making possible the extension of slavery; and the

Dred Scott Decision, reducing the slave to the same status as any other property that could be carried into any territory, thoroughly aroused his indignation.

Early in 1856 a convention of all opposed to slave extension was called at Bloomington. Lincoln was there and in response to repeated calls came forward and made a speech of such earnestness and power that those who heard it never forgot the impression made. Then from that enthusiastic meeting he returned to the chill atmosphere of indifference in Springfield where an attempt to call a local convention resulted in the attendance of three persons, Lincoln, his partner Herndon and one other man. This was trying, but Lincoln's wit and good humor was equal to the occasion, and he said that the meeting was larger than he knew it would be, for he knew that he and his partner would attend and here was another man brave enough to come out. Then he added, "while all seems dead, the age in which we live is not dead. It liveth as sure as our Maker liveth."

In the presidential campaign of 1856 the Republicans of Illinois put Lincoln on their elec-

toral ticket and he stumped the state, making about fifty speeches, which attracted attention, made him the recognized leader of his party in the state, and brought him some recognition from neighboring states.

His reputation reached the East, where it met some lack of appreciation, and in certain quarters a little hostility, which he felt to be hurtful to his prospects, as well as unjust to a prominent Republican of the West. Horace Greeley, a well meaning enthusiast, but a little lacking in foresight, the editor of the New York Tribune, cast the powerful influence of that paper against him. Greeley seemed to have always been anti-Lincoln, and he became pro-Douglas after Douglas aided in the defeat of the Lecompton Constitution. As the Senatorial election of 1858 was approaching, and Lincoln hoped to be a candidate, he regretted this attitude of Greeley. He said, "I am afraid that Greeley's attitude will hurt me with Seward, Sumner, Wilson, and other friends in the East." It is interesting to note who he regarded as his friends in the East. They were the most prominent antislavery men. His faithful law partner, Herndon, made a trip to the



East, largely for the purpose of communicating a favorable impression, concerning Lincoln, to those great men of the East.

In the Spring of 1858 the Democratic convention in Illinois endorsed the position taken by Douglas in the controversy concerning Kansas, which meant that they would support him for reelection to the Senate the following winter, by the State Legislature, which was to be elected that fall. In the very nature of things, the Republican convention nominated Lincoln, and the people looked forward to a battle royal between the two giants in debate.

The Democrats had regularly carried the state of Illinois in the past, but now all was uncertain, and particularly uncertain concerning Douglas, in the campaign of 1858. First, he had pleased the Southern Democrats and displeased the Northern Democrats by his part in repealing the Missouri Compromise and opening the Territories to the possibility of the extension of slavery. Now, more recently, he had, in turn, greatly displeased the proslavery Democrats, and pleased the antislavery Democrats by opposing the Lecompton Constitution to admit Kansas as a slave state. While South-

ern Democrats were reading him out of the party, Northern Democrats were trying to persuade Republicans in Illinois that the best thing that they could do for the cause of freedom was to not nominate a candidate against Douglas at all in Illinois; and some Republicans and some of the old Whigs in the East were ready to urge their friends in Illinois to support Douglas and thus give him a hearty welcome into the antislavery ranks. They were dazzled by his accumulation of prestige, popularity, his seductive eloquence, his parliamentary skill and his mastery over men. The old lines of allegiance were broken and Democrats felt the call to do some new thinking.

Those who were not Democrats were even more confused. The old Whig organization was gone. The Republican party was new but had grown so rapidly as to occasion wild conjecture as to what it might do in the way of numerical strength. Its general principle of opposition to the extension of slavery drew into its fold most of the old Whigs and some of the antislavery Democrats. The general political condition was so confused as to call upon many to make new decisions as to their affiliations,

thus insuring intense interest in the forthcoming Lincoln-Douglas contest.

Lincoln expected to be nominated, and for some time had been preparing his speech of acceptance with great care. Whatever else he might be doing he was also thinking about his speech, writing down portions of it on small pieces of paper, rewriting and thinking until he had it all carefully worded and committed. Time proved that he was justified in the most careful preparation, for his speech was watched for with the keenest interest, and all his words subjected to the most critical discussion.

When his speech was finished, the day before he was to deliver it, he called together a group of his friends and admirers and read it to them. When he read his introductory paragraph, which has since become famous for the words: "a house divided against itself can not stand," he saw only consternation and positive disapproval in the faces of all his hearers except that of his partner, Herndon. Their condemnation of his exordium, Lincoln heard with gravity rather than surprise, then explained that what he said was just what he thought ought to be said and that he would rather say

that and be defeated than to leave it unsaid and be elected, and accordingly the next day he spoke the fateful paragraph without changing a word.

The dire prediction of his friends was fully justified by the immediate and temporary results; but the foresight of Lincoln was proved in the long run. To some of his friends who grumbled about his "mistake," he replied that the time would come when they would consider it the wisest thing that he had ever said.

It is interesting to note that Seward, the most widely known Republican of the day, expressed the same thought in one of his speeches just a few months later, saying: "It is an irrepressible conflict between opposing and enduring forces, and it means that the United States must and will, sooner or later, become entirely a slaveholding nation or a free labor nation." But we need to remember that Seward ranked among the extreme agitators.

Men everywhere recognized in Lincoln's speech a resounding shot opening a furious forensic battle. His clearcut speech challenged the thinking of all parties. His declaration that "a house divided against itself can not

stand," displeased many even in the North, who wished peace at any price, and were constantly insisting that the house could stand—must stand—though divided. Many in the North hated fiercely the abolitionist agitators and many were inclined to class Lincoln among them. What later proved to be wise foresight, was then regarded as foolish agitation, calculated only to stir up needless strife. But Lincoln's supporters saw in his standard the crusader's high call to duty. There were present all the elements of a fierce political struggle, with the people thoroughly aroused,—the champions—two of the foremost men in the nation, and evenly matched; many felt instinctively that somehow the destiny of the Republic hung in the balance. Douglas,—spoken of as "The Little Giant,"—and easily regarded as the strongest antagonist in the whole Democratic party; Lincoln, confidently regarded by his friends as a match, in debate, for any man living; the Republicans said: "Lincoln must challenge Douglas to a joint debate." He did. Douglas accepted, and named seven meetings so arranged that he should open and close at four and Lincoln at three of the engagements.

To hear these gigantic encounters the people gathered in vast multitudes numbering thousands, even ten and twenty thousands; coming in wagons and camping, parading, building bonfires, drinking and celebrating. Lincoln fully appreciated the burden and responsibility of a contest so momentous. He was thoroughly prepared, knew just what he wished to say and said it with well directed clearness, but also with evident caution. From the very beginning, he had to meet a false interpretation of his famous opening paragraph in his speech of acceptance. His words, "A house divided against itself can not stand," which he meant for a prediction and a clear invitation to open minded thinking, were by Douglas distorted into a challenge, or an avowal of purpose to wage war against slavery until either the institution of slavery should be destroyed or the doctrine of abolitionism should be forever silenced.

While Lincoln's forecast that the Nation would become "all one or all the other," proved, a little later, to be wise, at that time it was not what most men wished to hear; for they wished peace. The Nation had endured half

slave and half free, and they could not see why it should not continue to endure thus divided. Douglas made the most of this opportunity to appeal to the superficial and short-sighted thinking of the crowd. He represented Lincoln's words to be "revolutionary," "inviting to warfare," designed to bring on a struggle between the North and the South which should drive one or the other to the wall and make it entirely submissive to the other, subject to the rapacity and revenge of the victor.

This undeserved misrepresentation annoyed Lincoln, but he answered with painstaking and patient logic, explaining carefully again and again just what he did mean, and that he did not mean the inferences which Douglas was so adroitly reading into his words. Lincoln's mind worked with cautious honesty. He thought out great principles which he believed to be true, stated them clearly, and often repeated them again after the lapse of years. In 1855, he closed a letter with the words: "Our political problem now is: Can we, as a nation, continue together permanently—forever, half slave and half free? The problem is too mighty for me. May God in His mercy superintend



the solution." Thus we see an honest and modest conviction had been growing in his mind. He had not been trying to phrase a statement to catch the ear of the crowd and make himself popular; but had been seeking the fundamental truth. With art and effective plausibility, Douglas went on day after day, reiterating his misinterpretations of Lincoln's words. Lincoln was vexed, but with patience he went on explaining that he had not expressed a doctrine, had not meant to voice a determination, nor any purpose or policy whatever. Lincoln was too courageous to leave his position in doubt. He said, "If you will carefully read that passage over, you will find that I did not say that I was in favor of anything. I only said what I expected would take place. I did not even say that I desired that slavery should be put in the course of ultimate extinction. I do say so now, however, so there need be no doubt about that." Lincoln added, "There is no way of putting an end to the slavery agitation among us but by putting it back upon the basis where our fathers placed it . . . Then the public mind will rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction."

Lincoln and Douglas each eloquently evoked the shades of "the fathers," who, having reached the eternal silence, could be claimed by both sides. This contention, though somewhat irrelevant, was none the less strenuous; for the opinions of the fathers could not make slavery either right or wrong. Douglas continually charged Lincoln with having said that "the Union could not endure as our fathers made it, with both slave and free states;" as though Lincoln were guilty of a sort of blasphemy against our national demigods.

Lincoln very aptly retorted that our fathers had not made the nation half free and half slave, but had found it so and could do no more than put the seal of their disapprobation upon slavery, which they did in many instances, and left it so restricted that the popular mind rested in the belief that it was in the course of extinction. Then Lincoln charged, repeatedly, that slavery had not been left as the fathers left it, but that Douglas and others had promoted a series of changes for the purpose of making it universal; and through the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, and The Dred Scott Decision,

they had advanced slavery to where all that they now needed was another Supreme Court decision making slavery lawful in all the states to accomplish their proslavery purposes; and the completion of that purpose might be accomplished as soon as Douglas could persuade the people to accept his attitude of "do not care whether slavery be voted up or voted down."

At that point in the discussion, Lincoln repeatedly put the following question, which the adept Douglas would never answer directly: "Since another decision of the Supreme Court is all that is now lacking to make slavery alike lawful in all the states; if such a decision is made, holding that the people of the states can not exclude slavery, will Douglas support that decision, or not?" Lincoln and Douglas each stood in a difficult position, on uncertain ground, because the minds of the natural followers of each were obviously undergoing slow transition; and subsequent events proved that the speakers themselves were not permanently fixed in their attitudes. Douglas seemed to be trying to express a compromise between Northern and Southern Democrats; Lincoln,

while being clearcut and candid in his own position, expressed the position of the Republicans, while, at heart he seemed to feel with the more extreme abolitionists. Lincoln said: "The Republican party thinks that slavery is a moral, a social and a political wrong." "I have always hated slavery as much as any abolitionist." Then he added that which did not please the abolitionists: "I have no purpose whatever to interfere with slavery where it exists—no lawful right to do so." Yet we know that about a quadrennium later, as President, he did issue his Emancipation Proclamation.

Lincoln moved his hearers with eloquent phrases concerning the "free and equal" clauses in the Declaration of Independence; and Douglas replied that the fathers meant "free and equal" white men and had no reference to slaves or inferior races.

"Lincoln said: "I have no purpose to produce political and social equality. I am not in favor of making voters or jurors of negroes or of qualifying them to hold office or of allowing them to intermarry with white people . . . Judge Douglas infers that because I do not want a negro woman for a slave, that I must

want her for a wife. I do not understand it that way. My understanding is that I can just let her alone . . . I have never had the least apprehension that I or my friends would marry negroes, even if there was no law to keep them from it; but as Judge Douglas and his friends seem to be in great apprehension that they might, if there were no law to keep them from it, I give him the most solemn pledge that I will, to the very last, stand by the law of this state which forbids the marrying of white people with negroes." . . . "I agree with Judge Douglas that the negro is not my equal in many respects, but in the right to eat the bread which his own hand has produced, without the leave of anybody else, he is my equal, and the equal of Judge Douglas, and the equal of any living man."

Thus Lincoln differed from the abolitionist crusaders of the East. He also differed from them in matters of temper and attitude toward opponents; in which regard he differed from most political speakers of the day. We find him more temperate, fair, courteous and dignified even than Douglas in the debate. Douglas very adeptly endeavored to belittle

Lincoln in his narration of their previous acquaintance with one another. Lincoln's conduct of the debate was more generous and magnanimous than that of Douglas. His denunciations were against slavery and not against slaveholders; he said: "I have no prejudice against the Southern people. They are just what we should be if we were in their situation. If slavery did not now exist among them, they would not introduce it. If it did now exist among us, we should not instantly give it up. It does seem to me that systems of gradual emancipation might be adopted; but, for their tardiness in this, I shall not undertake to judge our brethren of the South." On one occasion he said: "If all earthly power were given to me, I would not know what to do with the existing institution. . . . It might be best to have all the colored population in a state by themselves."

He mentioned possible deportation to Africa, but he did not abuse men who declined to adopt his methods. While he was dealing with questions, that were arousing antagonisms, as bitter as men had ever known, he never showed bitterness himself. He thought slowly, cau-

tiously, profoundly and with absolute fairness. His entire purpose was to think out the truth and then to state it so clearly that his hearers could not misunderstand. His aim was not to defeat an adversary, but to state a truth, in such a manner that an adversary could not overcome his truth. He did not aim to say things that were merely most popular for that day's debate, but to say the thing that would endure the test of time and prove to be eternal justice. He loved the truth, used faultless logic, and never resorted to fallacy.

Lincoln pressed Douglas severely with questions as to what attitude he would take toward certain issues that might arise concerning slavery in the territories; and when Lincoln's followers advised him not to press such questions, he replied, "Douglas can not answer those questions and be elected President in 1860." "The battle of 1860 is worth a hundred of this."

Lincoln seemed to feel a duty beyond that of success in the present argument. He seemed to feel the burden of responsibility for presenting the Republican position to be greater than that of personal success. To win the Senator-



ship seemed an insignificant part of what he had undertaken; his momentous duty was to stimulate a great uprising. His speeches were grave and earnest. In that day political gatherings expected uproarious entertainment, but he gave them most profound problems for their thinking. Repeatedly he stigmatized slavery as a vast "moral, social and political evil;" and impressively denounced the position of an opponent who "cared not whether slavery be voted up or voted down." He said "slavery is not to be treated as 'only equal to the cranberry laws of Indiana;'" that slaves are not "on a par with onions and potatoes;" that slavery might look small to Douglas but to the great body of American people it was a "vast, moral evil."

He continued: "Judge Douglas contends that whatever community wants slaves has a right to have them; and so they have, if slavery is right, but if slavery is wrong they can have no right to do wrong. He says that slaves like other property may be carried into new territory, and that is true if slavery is right, but if slavery is wrong there can be no such right. There can be no comparison between right and wrong. That is the issue that shall con-

continue in this country when these poor tongues of ours shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between the two principles of right and wrong in the world. One is the common right of humanity and the other is the divine right of kings. It is the same spirit that says: 'you work and toil and earn bread and I will eat it.' It is a false philosophy—it is a false statesmanship—that undertakes to build up a system of policy upon the basis of caring nothing about the very thing that everybody cares most about."

When Lincoln's friends urged him to adopt a more popular style, he replied, "I do not seek to amuse the people but to convince them." The depth of his feelings is shown by a remark he once made to a friend during the campaign: "Sometimes in the excitement of speaking I seem to see the end of slavery. I feel the time is soon coming when the sun shall shine and the rain fall upon no man who goes forth to unrequited toil. How this will come, by whom it will come, when it will come I can not tell,—but that time will surely come."

The immediate result of the campaign was the election of Douglas as Senator, but Lin-

coln's questions obliged him to say things, to suit the Democrats of Illinois, which caused the Southern Democrats to turn against him with bitterness and mark him indelibly for slaughter. It is a great tribute to the personal influence of Douglas that he could be reelected with the administration Democrats against him. The popular vote stood, Republicans, 126,084; Douglas Democrats, 121,940; Lecompton Democrats, 5,091; but the apportionment of districts was such that Douglas was reelected. But the people of the Nation looking on saw the new man, Lincoln, get approximately four thousand votes more than the great leader of the Democrats. Douglas remarked, after the debate, that during his sixteen years in Congress he had not met so strong an antagonist.

Lincoln had worked very hard. During one hundred days of the heat of summer he had traveled constantly and spoken daily, making speeches that cost the most painstaking effort. He was worn out, and felt the defeat. He knew that he had gained in reputation and he expressed the belief that he had helped to advance the cause of freedom and justice. After all he was requested by the state committee to

contribute further to the campaign fund. His reply shows his circumstances and his spirit: "I am willing to pay according to my ability, but I am the poorest hand in the world to get others to pay. I have been on expense now so long without earning anything that I am without money for even household expenses. Still you can put down \$250 for me. This with what I have already paid will exceed my subscription of \$500. This too is in excess of my ordinary expenses during the campaign, which being added to my loss of time bears heavily upon one no better off than I am. . . . You are feeling badly; and this too shall pass away, never fear."

Among the results of the debate: Lincoln was invited to come and speak in many distant places in other states. Douglas made some speeches in the campaign in Ohio and Lincoln was invited to follow him there, which he did. He was invited to Kansas and made some speeches that were well attended and highly praised in that Territory. He was invited to speak in New York City and prepared for that occasion a speech that called forth the highest praise from many Eastern editors, including

Horace Greeley, who had been a supporter of Douglas.

From New York he was called to Massachusetts where he made a strong impression in speeches that were said to have contributed to the success of the Republicans in the subsequent campaign. In this Eastern campaign he begged the Republicans in the interest of peace and harmony, to say nothing from passion and ill-temper, but all the while the very issues which he must discuss were such as to leave no hope for harmony and not much hope for peace. Slavery was the one all absorbing topic everywhere, and Lincoln's speeches contained the entire position of the Republican party expressed with an effectiveness not surpassed, possibly not equaled, by any other man of that day. His speeches were too compact to admit of being abbreviated or condensed. His outstanding thought concerned the right or wrong of slavery. Slavery was either right or wrong. If it was right the South had a right to extend and protect it; but if it was wrong, the Republicans were right in restricting it to where it already existed and preventing its extension to new territories. That was the position of the

Republican party at that time; and no man stated that position more effectively than Lincoln.

Lincoln seldom mentioned, and then with the greatest care, the few ultra-Abolitionists; and though his feelings toward slavery was much like theirs, his words were very different, and he did not wish to say things that might stand in the way of the ultimate harmony of all the forces opposed to the extension of slavery. Douglas spoke often of the ultra-Abolitionists and wished his hearers to think of them in connection with the Republicans. At that time disunion and secession were words in common use among the masses. Douglas never used these words; and Lincoln mentioned them but few times and with the greatest caution. This fact is fraught with meaning, for the American people seem to understand that the chief cause and justification of the war was the Union. Even Lincoln, with as great honesty, candor and fearlessness as was ever manifested by any man who succeeded in gaining the support of enough of his fellow men to be elected, must be very cautious how he spoke concerning issues that were paramount at the time.

Some writers express contempt for the ultra-Abolitionists; others give to them all the praise, with contempt for all who were not Abolitionists; but surely both these views are too narrow to be just. Surely, the ultra-Abolitionists, who had no thought for their own welfare, but thought only of justice to others, deserve much credit for their part in awakening the public conscience to the evil of slavery; while a practical leader like Lincoln, though he win the rewards of election and fame, is to be honored for doing the best that could be done under the circumstances. We need not decide to whom belongs the greater honor, but certainly we shall not be just if we give any second place to those whose sacrifice is greatest, especially when they make that sacrifice with no hope of reward, and with full knowledge of what they will suffer, as well as with a clear vision of the great cause they serve.

Lincoln and the other Republican leaders said that if the extension of slavery was prevented, then slavery was in the course of extinction. Then if slavery was right, the triumph of the Republicans justified revolution to preserve slavery; unless the preservation of the Union

was of greater importance than the preservation of the right to have slaves. That is just what many persons in the North believed. They felt that the South had a right to keep their slaves, but had no right to destroy the Union to keep them, because the Union was of greater significance than slavery. Webster and others had preached Union until they had made the Union seem sacred. The Union, once destroyed, would not be restored in a long time if ever, but slavery tolerated for a time might at any time be restricted and put in the way of extinction.

Though Lincoln talked slavery rather than Union during all these campaigns, he later showed that he regarded the cause of the Union to be greater than the question of slavery, by all that he said and did when he became President. And Lincoln was indirectly and effectively teaching the people to save the Union in teaching them to regard slavery as wrong; for if slavery was wrong then a revolution to perpetuate slavery was a double wrong. Douglas also declared his loyalty to Lincoln and the Union as soon as the South began to secede. Thoughtful students of history declare that the



election of Lincoln as President in that crisis was the most fortunate event in American history; and if that be true, the Lincoln-Douglas debate, which made Lincoln President will not lose its interest so long as we study the history of America.

At the Republican State convention, at Springfield, June 16, 1858, Lincoln was chosen as the Republican candidate for the United States Senate against Senator Douglas. Lincoln made a speech in which he assailed the policies of Senator Douglas. This speech is considered the beginning of the Lincoln-Douglas debate; and the paragraphs here quoted were used continuously during that contest. Lincoln said:

"If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do and how to do it. We are now far into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object, and confident promise of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation not only has not ceased, but has constantly augmented. In my opinion it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed.

'A house divided against itself can not stand.' I believe that this government can not endure half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved; I do not expect the house to fall; but I do expect it to cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery shall arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or the advocates of slavery will push it forward until it shall become alike lawful in all the states, old as well as new, and North as well as South. Have we no tendency toward the latter condition? Let anyone who doubts carefully contemplate that now we have almost a completed legal combination-piece of machinery, so to speak, compounded of the Nebraska doctrine and the Dred Scott decision.

"Put this and that together, and we have another nice little niche, which we may, ere long, see filled with another Supreme Court decision, saying that the Constitution of the United States does not permit a State to exclude slavery from its limits. And this may especially be expected if the doctrine of 'care

not whether slavery be voted up or voted down,' shall gain upon the public mind sufficient hold to give promise that such a decision can be maintained when made. Such a decision is all that slavery now lacks of being alike lawful in all the States.

"Welcome or unwelcome, such a decision is probably coming, and will be upon us, unless the power of the present political dynasty shall be met and overthrown. We shall lie down pleasantly dreaming that the people of Missouri are on the verge of making their state free, and we shall awake to the reality, instead, that the Supreme Court has made Illinois a slave state. To meet and overthrow that dynasty is the work of all those people who would prevent that consummation. That is what we have to do. How can we best do it?

"There are those who denounce us openly to their own friends, and yet whisper to us softly that Senator Douglas is the aptest instrument there is with which to affect that object. They wish us to infer all, from the fact that he now has a little quarrel with the present head of that dynasty; and that he has regularly voted with us on a single point on which he and we

have never differed. They remind us that he is very great and that the largest of us are very small ones. Let this be granted. 'But a living dog is better than a dead lion.' Judge Douglas, if not a dead lion, is for this fight, a caged and toothless one.

"How can Judge Douglas oppose the advance of slavery? He does not care anything about it. His avowed mission is to impress the 'public heart' to care nothing about it. A leading Douglas Democratic newspaper thinks that Douglas's superior talent will be needed to resist the revival of the African slave trade. Does Douglas believe that an effort to revive that trade is approaching? He has not said so. Does he really think so? But if it is, how can he resist it? For years he has labored to prove that it is a sacred right of white men to take negro slaves into new Territories. Can he show that it is possibly less a sacred right to buy them where they can be bought cheapest? And unquestionably they can be bought cheaper in Africa than in Virginia.

"He has done all in his power to reduce the question of slavery to one of mere property; and as such, how can he oppose the foreign

slave trade? How can he refuse that trade in that 'property' shall be 'perfectly free,' unless he does it as a protection to the home production? And as the home producers will probably not ask the protection, he will be wholly without ground for opposition to the slave trade.

"Senator Douglas holds, we know, that a man may rightfully be wiser today than he was yesterday—that he may rightfully change when he finds himself in the wrong. But can we, for that reason, run ahead, and infer that he will make any particular change, of which he himself has given no intimation? Can we safely base our action on any such vague inference? Now, as ever, I wish not to misrepresent Judge Douglas's position, question his motives, or do aught that could be personally offensive to him.

"Whenever, if ever, he and we shall come together on principle, so that our cause may have assistance from his great ability, I hope to have interposed no adventitious obstacle. But, clearly, he is not now with us,—he does not pretend to be, he does not promise ever to be.

"Our cause, then, must be entrusted to, and

conducted by, its own undoubted friends—those whose hands are free, whose hearts are in the work—who do care for the result. Two years ago the Republicans of the Nation mustered over thirteen hundred thousand strong. We did this under the single impulse of resistance to a common danger. With every external circumstance against us, of strange, discordant, and even hostile elements, we gathered from the four winds, and formed and fought the battle through, under the constant hot fire of a disciplined, proud and pampered enemy. Did we brave all then to falter now?—Now when that same enemy is wavering, dissevered, and belligerent? The result is not doubtful. We shall not fail. If we stand firm we shall not fail. Wise counsels may accelerate, or mistakes delay it; but sooner or later the victory is sure to come.”

Douglas said:

“Prior to 1854 the people of this country were divided into two great political parties, known as the Whig Party and the Democratic Party. Both were national and patriotic, advocating principles that were universal in their application. An old-time Whig could proclaim

his principles in Louisiana and in Massachusetts alike. Whig principles had no boundary sectional line—they were not limited by the Ohio River, nor by the Potomac, nor by the line between free and slave states, but applied and were proclaimed wherever the constitution ruled and the flag waved over the American soil.”

“So it was and so it is with the great Democratic party, which, from the days of Jefferson until this period, has proved itself to be the historic party of this nation. While the Whig party and the Democratic party differed in regard to banking, tariff, specie circular, and the subtreasury, they agreed on the great slavery question which now agitates this Union. I say that the Whig party and the Democratic party agreed on the slavery question while they differed on those questions of expediency to which I have referred. The Whig party and the Democratic party jointly adopted the compromise measure of 1850 as a basis of a proper and just solution of the question of slavery in all its forms. Clay was the great leader with Webster on his right and Cass on his left and supported by the patriots

in both the Whig and Democratic parties who had devised and enacted the great compromise measures in 1850."

"In 1854, Mr. Abraham Lincoln and Mr. Lyman Trumbull entered into an arrangement one with the other, and each with his respective friends, to dissolve the old Whig party on the one hand and to dissolve the old Democratic party on the other hand, and to connect the members of both into an Abolition party, under the name and disguise of the Republican party. The terms of that arrangement, between Lincoln and Trumbull, have been published by Lincoln's special friend, Jas. H. Matheny, Esq., and they were that Lincoln should have General Shield's place in the United States Senate, which was then about to become vacant, and Mr. Trumbull was to have my place at the expiration of my term. Lincoln went to work to abolitionize the old Whig party all over the state, pretending that he was then as good a Whig as ever; and Trumbull went to work in his part of the state preaching abolitionism in its milder forms and trying to abolitionize the Old Democratic party and bind it and bring old Democrats



bound hand and foot into the Abolition camp. In pursuance of the arrangement the parties met at Springfield in October, 1854, and proclaimed their new platform. Lincoln was to bring into the Abolition camp the old-time Whigs and transfer them over to Giddings, Chase, Fred Douglas and Parson Lovejoy, who were ready to receive them and christen them into their new faith.

“I desire to know whether Mr. Lincoln stands today as he did in 1854, in favor of the repeal of the Fugitive Slave Law. I desire him to say whether he stands today, as he did in 1854, against the admission of any more slave states into the Union, even if the people want them. I want to know whether he stands pledged against the admission of a state into the Union with such a Constitution as the people of that state see fit to make. I want to know whether he stands pledged today to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. I desire him to state whether he still stands pledged to the prohibition of the slave trade between the different states. I desire to know whether he stands pledged to prohibit slavery in all the territories, North

as well as South of the Missouri Compromise line. I desire him to say whether he is opposed to the acquisition of any more territory unless slavery is prohibited therein. I want his answer to these questions. Your affirmative cheers in favor of this Abolition platform are not satisfactory. I ask Abraham Lincoln to answer these questions in order that when I trot him down to lower Egypt, I may put the same questions to him there.

“My principles are the same everywhere. I can proclaim them alike in the North and the South, in the East and the West. My principles will apply wherever the Constitution prevails and the American flag waves. I desire to know whether Mr. Lincoln’s principles will bear transplanting from Ottawa to Jonesboro. I put these questions to him today distinctly and I desire an answer. I have a right to an answer, for I quote from the platform of the Republican party as he helped to frame it at the time that party was formed, and the bargain made by Lincoln to deliver the old Whig party and transfer its members bound hand and foot to the Abolition party under the direction of Giddings and Fred Douglas.

"In the remarks which I have made on this platform, and the position of Mr. Lincoln upon it, I mean nothing at all disrespectful to that gentleman. I have known him for nearly twenty-five years. There were many points of sympathy between us when we first got acquainted. We were both comparatively boys, and both struggling with poverty in a strange land. I was a school-teacher in the town of Winchester, and he a flourishing grocery-keeper in the town of Salem. He was more successful in his occupation than I was in mine, therefore more fortunate in this world's goods. Lincoln is one of those admirable men who perform with wonderful skill whatever they undertake. I made as good school-teacher as I could, and when a cabinet maker I made good beds and desks, but my old boss said that I succeeded better with bureaus and secretaries than with anything else; but I believe that Lincoln was always more successful in business than I was for his business enabled him to get into the Legislature.

"I met him there, and had sympathy with him, because of the uphill struggle that we both had in life. He was then just as good in

telling anecdotes as he is now. He could beat any of the boys in wrestling, running a foot race or tossing a copper; could ruin more liquor than all the boys of the town together, and the dignity and impartiality with which he could preside at a horse race or fist fight excited the praise and won the admiration of everybody who was present and participated. I sympathised with him because he was struggling with difficulties, and so was I. Mr. Lincoln served with me in the Legislature in 1836, when we both retired, and he subsided, or became submerged, and was lost sight of as a public man for some years.

"In 1846 when Wilmot introduced his celebrated proviso, and the abolition tornado swept the country, Lincoln again turned up as a member of Congress from the Sangamon district. I was then in the Senate of the United States and was glad to welcome my old friend and companion. While in Congress, he distinguished himself by his opposition to the Mexican War, taking the side of the common enemy against his own country; and when he returned home he found that the indignation of the people followed him everywhere, and he

was again submerged, obliged to retire into private life, forgotten by his former friends. He came up again in 1854 just in time to make an Abolition or Black Republican platform, in company with Giddings, Chase, Lovejoy and Fred Douglas, for the Republican party to stand upon.

"These two men, Lincoln and Trumbull, having formed this combination to abolitionize the old Whig party and the old Democratic party, and put themselves into the Senate of the United States, in pursuance of their bargain are now carrying out that arrangement. Matheny states that Trumbull broke faith; that the bargain was that Lincoln should be the Senator in Shield's place, and Trumbull cheated Lincoln, having control of four or five abolitionized Democrats who were holding over in the State Senate; he would not let them vote for Lincoln, which obliged the rest of the abolitionists to vote for Trumbull in order to have an abolition Senator. There are a number of authorities for the truth of this statement besides Matheny, and I suppose that Lincoln himself will not deny it.

"When Washington, Jefferson, Franklin,

Hamilton, Jay and the other great men of that day, made this government, they divided it into slave States and free States, and left each State perfectly free to do as it pleased on the question of slavery. Why can it not exist on the same principles on which our fathers made it? They knew when they framed the Constitution that in a country as wide and as broad as this, with such a variety of climate, production, and interest, the people necessarily required different laws and regulations; what would suit the granite-hills of New Hampshire would be unsuited to the rice-plantations of South Carolina; and they therefore provided that each state should retain its own Legislature and its own sovereignty, with full and complete power to do as it pleased within its own limits in all things that were local and not national.

“One of the reserved rights of the state was the right to regulate the relations between master and servant on the slavery question. At the time the Constitution was framed there were thirteen States in the Union, twelve of which were slaveholding States and one a free State. Suppose that this doctrine of uniformity,

preached by Mr. Lincoln, that the states should all be free or all be slave had prevailed. What would have been the result? Of course the twelve slave holding states would have overruled the one free state, and slavery would have been fastened by a constitutional provision on every inch of the American Republic, instead of it being left as our fathers wisely left it for each state to decide for itself. Here I assert that uniformity in the local laws of the different states is neither possible nor desirable. If uniformity had been adopted as a principle everywhere, when the government was established, it must have either been the uniformity of slavery everywhere or the uniformity of negro-citizenship and negro equality everywhere.

“We are told by Lincoln that he is opposed to the Dred Scott decision, and that he will not submit to it, because, as he says, it deprives the negro of the rights and privileges of citizenship. This is the first and main reason which he assigns for his warfare on the Supreme Court of the United States and its decision. I ask you, are you in favor of conferring upon a negro the rights and privileges

of citizenship? Do you desire to strike out of our State Constitution that clause which keeps savages and free negroes out of the State, and allow free negroes to flow over the State and establish black settlements? Do you desire to turn this beautiful State into a free negro colony, in order that when Missouri abolishes slavery she can send a hundred thousand emancipated slaves into this State to become citizens and voters on an equality with yourselves?

“If you desire negro citizenship; if you desire to have them come into the State and settle with the white man; if you desire to have them vote on an equality with yourselves, and to make them eligible to office, to sit on juries and adjudge your rights,—then support Mr. Lincoln and the Black Republican party, who are in favor of the citizenship of the negro. For one, I am opposed to negro citizenship in any and every form. I believe that this government was made on the white basis. I believe that this government was made by white men for the benefit of white men and their posterity forever; and I am in favor of confining citizenship to white men of European de-



scent, instead of conferring it upon negroes, Indians and other inferior races. Mr. Lincoln, following the lead and example of all the little abolition orators who go around and lecture in the basement of schools and churches, reads from the Declaration of Independence that all men are created equal and then asks how in the face of God and the Declaration of Independence you can deprive the negro of that equality which God and the Declaration of Independence have awarded to him. He and they declare that negro equality is guaranteed by the laws of God and asserted in the Declaration of Independence. If they think so, of course they have a right to say so, and so vote. I do not question Mr. Lincoln's conscientious belief that the negro was created his equal, and hence his brother; but for my own part I do not regard the negro as my equal or my brother, and I deny that he is any kin to me whatever. Lincoln has evidently learned by heart Parson Lovejoy's catechism. He can repeat it as well as Farnsworth, and is entitled to a medal from Father Giddings and Fred Douglas for his abolitionism. He holds that the negro was born his equal and yours, and that he was endowed with

equality by the Almighty, and that no human law can deprive him of these rights which were guaranteed to him by the Supreme Ruler of the universe.

“Now I do not believe that the Almighty ever intended the negro to be the equal of the white man. If He did He has been a long time demonstrating that fact. For thousands of years the negro has been a race on the face of the earth, and during all that time, wherever he has wandered or been taken he has been inferior to the race which he has there met. He belongs to an inferior race and must always occupy an inferior position. I do not hold that because the negro is our inferior that therefore he ought to be a slave. By no means can such a conclusion be drawn from what I have said. I hold that humanity and Christianity both require that the negro shall have and enjoy every right, every privilege and immunity consistent with the safety of the society in which he lives. On that point, I presume there can be no diversity of opinion. You and I are bound to extend to our inferior and dependent beings every right, every privilege, every faculty and

every immunity consistent with the public good.

“The question then arises, what rights and privileges are consistent with the public good? This is a question which each State and each Territory must decide for itself. Illinois has decided it for herself. We have provided that the negro shall not be a slave, and we have also provided that he shall not be a citizen, but we protect him in his civil rights, his right to property, his right to protection, only depriving him of all political rights whatever, and refusing to put him on an equality with the white man. That policy of Illinois is satisfactory to the Democratic party and to me, and if it were satisfactory to the Republican party then there would be no question on the subject; but the Republicans say that he ought to be made a citizen, and when he becomes a citizen he becomes your equal with all your rights and privileges. The Republicans assert the Dred Scott decision to be monstrous because it denies that the negro is or can become a citizen under the Constitution.

“Now I hold that Illinois has a right to abolish slavery, as she did, and I hold that Ken-

tucky has the same right to continue slavery and protect it that Illinois has to abolish it. I hold that New York has as much right to abolish slavery as Virginia has to protect it, and that each and every state of this Union is a sovereign power, with the right to do as it pleases with the question of slavery, and with all its domestic institutions. Slavery is not the only question which comes up in this controversy. A far more important one to you is, what shall be done with the free negro. We have settled the slavery question in Illinois so far as we are concerned, we have prohibited it in Illinois forever, and in doing so I think that we have done wisely, and there is no man in the state who would be more strenuous in his opposition to the introduction of slavery into the state than I would; but when we settled it for ourselves we exhausted all our power over that subject. We have done our whole duty, and can do no more. We must leave each and every other state to decide the same question for itself.

“In relation to the policy to be pursued toward the free negroes, we have said that they shall not vote; while Maine on the other hand

has said that they shall vote. Maine is a sovereign state and has the power to regulate the qualifications of voters within her limits. I would never confer the qualification for citizenship and voting upon a negro, but I am not going to quarrel with Maine for differing from me in opinion. Let Maine take care of her own negroes, and fix her own qualifications for voting, without interfering with Illinois, and Illinois will not interfere with Maine. So with the state of New York. She allows the negro to vote provided he owns two hundred and fifty dollars worth of property and not otherwise. While I would not make any distinction whatever between a negro who held property and one who did not, yet if the sovereign state of New York chooses to make that distinction it is her business and not mine, and I will not quarrel with her for it. She can do as she pleases on this question if she minds her own business, and we shall do the same thing.

"Now, my friends, if we will only act conscientiously and rigidly upon this great principle of popular sovereignty, which guarantees to each state and territory the right to do as it pleases on all things local and domestic, in-

stead of Congress interfering, we shall continue at peace one with another. Why should Missouri be at war with Illinois, or Kentucky with Ohio, or Virginia with New York merely because their domestic institutions differ? The founders of the Republic knew that the North and the South, having different climates, productions and interests would need different institutions. This doctrine of Mr. Lincoln, of having uniformity among the institutions of the different states, is a new doctrine, never dreamed of by Washington or Madison or any of the framers of the government. Mr. Lincoln and the Republican party set themselves up as wiser than the men who framed this government which has flourished for seventy years, under the principle of popular sovereignty, recognizing the right of each state to do as it pleased with its domestic affairs. Under that principle we have grown from a nation of about three or four millions to a nation of about thirty millions of people; we have crossed the Allegheny mountains and filled up the whole Northwest, turning the prairies into a garden, and building up churches and schools, thus spreading Christianity where before there was

nothing but a few savages and barbarians. Under that principle we have become, from a feeble nation, the most powerful on the face of the earth, and if we only adhere to that principle, we shall go forward, increasing in territory, in power, in strength, and in glory, until the Republic of America shall be the North Star that shall guide the friends of freedom throughout the civilized world. And why can we not adhere to the great principle of self government upon which our institutions were originally based? I believe that this new doctrine preached by Mr. Lincoln and his party will dissolve the Union if it succeeds."

Lincoln replied to Douglas:

"When a man hears himself somewhat misrepresented, it provokes him—at least I find it so with myself; but when misrepresentation becomes very gross and palpable, it is more apt to amuse him. The first thing I see fit to notice is the fact that Judge Douglas alleges, after running through the history of the old Whig party and the old Democratic party, that Judge Trumbull and myself made an arrangement in 1854 by which I was to have the place of General Shields in the United States Sen-

ate, and Judge Trumbull was to have the place of Judge Douglas. Now all I have to say on that subject is that I think that no man can prove it—not even Judge Douglas—because it is not true. I have no doubt he is conscientious' in saying it. As to those resolutions that he took such a time to read, as being the platform of the Republican party in 1854, I will say that I never had anything to do with them and I do not think that Trumbull ever had. Judge Douglas cannot show that either of us ever had anything to do with them.

“Now about this story that Judge Douglas tells about Trumbull bargaining to sell out the old Democratic party, and Lincoln agreeing to sell out the old Whig party, I do know about that, and Judge Douglas does not know about it; and I will say that there is no substance to that story whatever. Yet I have no doubt he is conscientious about it. I know that after Mr. Lovejoy got into the Legislature that winter he complained of me that I had told all the old Whigs of his district that the old Whig party was good enough for them, and some of them voted that way because I told them so.



"Anything that argues me into the idea of perfect political or social equality with the negro is but a specious and fantastic arrangement of words, by which a man can prove a horse-chestnut to be a chestnut horse. I will say here, while on this subject, that I have no purpose directly to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe that I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so. I have no purpose to introduce political and social equality between the white and black races. There is a physical difference between the two, which, in my judgment, will forever forbid their living together in perfect equality; and inasmuch as it becomes a necessity that there should be a difference, I, as well as Judge Douglas, am in favor of the race to which I belong having the supremacy.

"I have never said anything to the contrary, but I hold that, notwithstanding all this, there is no reason in the world why the negro is not entitled to all the natural rights enumerated in the Declaration of Independence, the right of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. I hold that he is as much entitled to these

as the white man. I agree with Judge Douglas that he is not my equal in many respects, certainly not in color, and perhaps not in moral and intellectual endowment. But in the right to eat the bread which his own hands have earned, without the leave of anybody else, he is my equal, the equal of Judge Douglas, and the equal of every living man.

“Now I pass on to consider one or two more of these little follies. The Judge is woefully at fault about his early friend Lincoln being a ‘grocery-keeper’....He is mistaken, Lincoln never kept a grocery anywhere in the world. And so my friend the Judge is equally at fault when he charges that when I was in Congress I opposed our soldiers who were fighting in the Mexican War. The Judge did not make his charge very distinct, but I can tell you what you can prove by the record. You can remember that I was an old Whig, and whenever the Democrats tried to get me to vote that the war had been righteously begun by the President, I would not do it. But whenever they asked for money to pay the soldiers, or any land-warrants for the soldiers during all that time I cast the same vote that Judge

Douglas did. You can think as you please as to whether that was consistent.

"Such was the truth, and the Judge has a right to make all he can out of it. But when he, by a general charge, tries to convey the idea that I voted to withhold support from the soldiers who were fighting in the War, or did anything else to hinder the soldiers in the Mexican War, he is, to say the least, grossly and altogether mistaken, as a consultation of the records will prove to him.

"He has read from my speech in Springfield in which I say that 'a house divided against itself can not stand.' Does the Judge say that it can stand? I do not understand whether he does or not. The Judge does not seem to be attending to me just now, but I would like to know if it is his opinion that a house divided against itself can stand. If he thinks that a house divided against itself can stand then it is a question of veracity, not between the Judge and myself, but between the Judge and an authority of a somewhat higher character.

"Now, my friends, I ask your attention to this matter for the purpose of saying something seriously. I know that the Judge may

readily agree with me that the maxim which was put forth by the Savior is true, but he may allege that I misapply it, and the Judge has a right to argue that in my application, I do misapply it, and then I have a right to show that I do not misapply it.

“When he undertakes to say, that because I think that this nation, so far as the question of slavery is concerned, will all become one thing or all the other, that I am in favor of bringing about a dead uniformity in all the institutions of the states, he argues erroneously. The great variety of local institutions in the states, springing from differences in soil, differences in the face of the country, and in the climate, are bonds of union. They do not make a ‘house divided against itself’ but they make a house united. If they produce in one section of the country what is wanted in another section, and this other section can supply the wants of the first, they are not matters of discord but bonds of union—true bonds of union.

“But can the institution of slavery be considered as among these varieties in the institutions of the country? I leave it to you

to say whether this institution of slavery has ever been a bond of union,—and if it has not always been an apple of discord and an element of division in the house. I ask you to consider whether so long as the moral constitution of men's minds shall remain the same, after this generation and assemblage shall sink into the grave, and another generation shall arise with the same intellectual and moral development as we have—whether if that institution is standing in the same irritating position in which it now is, it will not continue an element of division?

“If so, then I have a right to say that in regard to this question the Union is a house divided against itself; and when the Judge reminds me that I have often said to him that the institution of slavery has existed for seventy years in some states, and yet it does not exist in some others, I agree to the fact, and I account for it by looking at the position in which our fathers originally placed slavery—restricting it from the new territories where it had not gone, and legislating to cut off its source by abrogating the slave-trade, thus putting the seal of legislation against its spread.

The public mind did rest in the belief that it was in the course of ultimate extinction. But lately, I think—and in this I charge nothing to the Judge's motives—lately, I think that he, and those acting with him, have placed this institution on a new basis, which looks to the perpetuity and nationalization of slavery. And while it is placed upon this new basis, I say, and I have said, that I believe that we shall not have peace upon this question until the opponents arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or, on the other hand, that its advocates will push it forward until it shall become alike lawful in all the states, old as well as new, and North as well as South. Now I believe that if we could arrest the spread, and place it where Washington and Jefferson and Madison placed it, it would be in the course of ultimate extinction, and the public mind, as in the course of eighty years past, would believe that it was in the course of ultimate extinction. The crisis would be past, and the institution would be let alone for a hundred years—if it should live that long—in the

states where it exists, yet it would be going out of existence in the way that is best for both the black and white races. I ask the people here assembled and elsewhere to pay attention to the course which Judge Douglas is pursuing every day, as bearing upon this question of making slavery national. Not going back to the records, but taking the speeches he makes—the speeches he made yesterday and the day before, and is making constantly all over the country. I ask your attention to them. In the first place what is necessary to make the institution of slavery national? Not war.

“There is no danger that the people of Kentucky will shoulder their muskets and with a young nigger stuck on each bayonet march into Illinois and force them upon us. There is no danger of our going over there and making war on them. Then what is necessary for the nationalization of slavery? It is simply the next Dred Scott decision.

*“It is merely for the Supreme Court to decide that no state under the Constitution can exclude it; just as they have already decided that under the Constitution neither Congress nor any Territorial Legislature can exclude it.*

When that is decided and acquiesced in the whole thing is done. This being true, and this being the way I think, that slavery is to be made national, let us consider what Judge Douglas is doing every day to that end. In the first place, let us see what influence he is exerting upon public sentiment. In this and like communities, public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment nothing can fail, without it nothing can succeed. Consequently he who moulds public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions. He makes statutes and decisions possible or impossible to be executed. This must be borne in mind as also the additional fact that Judge Douglas is a man of vast influence, so great that it is enough for many men to profess to believe anything when they find out that Judge Douglas professes to believe in it. Consider too the attitude which he occupies at the head of a large party, a party which he claims has a majority of all the voters in the country.

“This man sticks to a decision which forbids the people of a Territory to exclude slavery, and he does so, not because he says it is right



in itself,—he does not give any opinion on that—but because it has been decided by the Court, and being decided by the Court, he is, and you are, bound to take it in your political action as law—not that he judges all of its merits, but because to him a decision of the Court is a ‘Thus saith the Lord.’

“He places it on that ground alone, and you will bear in mind that thus committing himself to this decision, not on the merit of the decision, but it is a “Thus saith the Lord,” will commit him to the next decision. It too will be a ‘Thus saith the Lord.’ The next decision as much as this will be a ‘Thus saith the Lord.’ There is nothing that can divert or turn him away from this decision. It is nothing that I point out to him that his great prototype, General Jackson, did not believe in the binding force of decisions. It is nothing to him that Jefferson did not so believe.

“But I can not shake Judge Douglas’s tooth loose from the Dred Scott decision. Like some obstinate animal (I mean no disrespect) that will hang on when once he has got his teeth fixed, you may cut off a leg but he will not relax his hold. He hangs on to the Dred

Scott decision. These things show that there is a purpose as strong as death and eternity which causes him to hold on to this decision, and which will cause him to hold on to like decisions from the same Court.

“Henry Clay, my beau-ideal of a statesman, the man for whom I fought all my humble life, Henry Clay once said, the men who would repress all tendencies to liberty and ultimate emancipation, they must if they would do this, go back to the era of our independence, and muzzle the cannon which thunders its annual joyous return; they must blow out the moral lights around us; they must penetrate the human soul and eradicate there the love of liberty; and then and not till then can they perpetuate slavery in this country. To my thinking, Judge Douglas is doing that very thing by his example and his vast influence in this country, when he says that the negro has no part in the Declaration of Independence. Henry Clay plainly understood the contrary.

“Judge Douglas is going back to the era of our Revolution and to the extent of his ability muzzling the cannon which thunders its joyous return. When he invites any people, will-

ing to have slavery, to establish it, he is blowing out the moral light around us. When he says that he 'cares not whether slavery be voted up or voted down,' that it is a sacred right of self-government, he is, in my judgment, penetrating the human soul and eradicating the light of reason and love of liberty in this American people. And now I will only say, that when, by all these means and appliances, Judge Douglas shall succeed in bringing public opinion into accord with his own views,—when these vast assemblages shall echo back all his sentiments,—when they shall come to repeat his views and avow his principles, and assent to all that he says on these mighty questions,—then it needs only the formality of another Dred Scott decision, which he endorses in advance, to make slavery alike lawful in all the states, old as well as new, and North as well as South."

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